REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for conducting a telephone conference with Applicants' counsel on March 4, 2008. **During the telephone conference, she agrees to grant a telephone interview after this reply, if there are still outstanding issues.**

Applicants have amended claims 1 and 2 to particularly point out the subject matter of their invention. **These amendments should be entered as they raise no new issues that will require further consideration or search and also does not touch the merits of the application within the meaning of 37 C.F.R. § 1.116(b).**

Claims 1-16 are currently pending. Applicants request that the Examiner reconsider the application, as amended, in view of the remarks below.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e)

The Examiner rejects claims 1-16 as anticipated by LaBarge et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0086793("LaBarge"). Claim 1, the only independent claim among the rejected claims, will be discussed first.

Amended claim 1, is directed to a catalyst having copper oxide, a mixture of ZSM-5 zeolite and zeolite β, and magnesium oxide. See Examples 1-3 and 5.

LaBarge describes a catalyst mixture containing 5 components, among which, (i) the second component includes a **hydrophilic** zeolite, e.g., X or Y type zeolite, and may also include calcium or barium; (ii) the third, fourth, and fifth components each include a **hydrophobic** zeolite, e.g., ZSM-5 or β zeolite; and (iii) the forth and fifth components may also include copper. See paragraph [0015] through paragraph [0020]. LaBarge does not disclose including magnesium oxide in a catalyst required by amended claim 1. Claim 1, as amended, is therefore not anticipated by LaBarge. Neither are claims 2-16, all of which depend from claim 1.[1]

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[1] Amended claim 1 is also non-obvious in view of LaBarge. As pointed out above, LaBarge only teaches use of calcium oxide or barium oxide in its catalyst mixture. It does not disclose or suggest use of magnesium oxide recited in amended claim 1. As shown in Table 1 and Table 2 at page 11 of the specification, with other conditions identical, a catalyst containing magnesium oxide (Example 1) is more effective in suppressing SO_2 conversion than a catalyst containing the same amount of calcium oxide (Example 4). In other words, using magnesium oxide achieves unexpected results as compared with using

CONCLUSION

Applicants submit that the grounds for rejection asserted by the Examiner have been overcome, and that claims 1-16, as pending, define subject matter that is novel over the prior art. On this basis, it is submitted that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance, an action of which is requested.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

No fee is believed due. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 50-4189, referencing Attorney Docket No. 66501-014US1.

Respectfully submitted,

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calcium oxide. Of note, barium, oxide of which is included in the catalyst mixture of LaBarge, is more remote from magnesium than calcium in the periodic table. As use of magnesium oxide is superior to use of calcium oxide, a skilled artisan would recognize that use of magnesium oxide is also advantageous over use of barium oxide.